

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas House of Representatives



February 24, 2017

Friends,

Happy Friday! The pace in Austin is picking up as filed bills make their way to committee. Many committees are holding hearings to educate new members on the issues that will be coming before them in the remaining months of the 85th legislative session.

Higher Education

On Wednesday, the Higher Education committee held its first meeting of the session. We heard testimony from Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Commissioner Raymund Paredes. Now more than ever, Texas is competing for jobs on a global level. A major factor in bringing jobs and keeping them in Texas is the ability to provide a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. According to the Commissioner, Texas has improved at increasing college completions for students from groups that traditionally have not earned certificates or degrees, however, the state has not improved quickly or broadly enough to keep up with changing demographics. The 60x30TX Plan is aimed to address this.

The 60x30TX higher education strategic plan is designed to help all students achieve their educational goals and help Texas remain globally competitive for years to come. The 60x30TX plan contains four broad goals. Each goal contains a set of targets that will move the state forward. Success in achieving the goals depends heavily on collaboration among higher education, K-12 education, and the workforce, as well as on the local creativity of Texas two-year and four-year institutions.

The four goals in the 60x30TX Plan are essential to the future prosperity of Texas.



-  **THE OVERARCHING GOAL: 60x30**
At least 60 percent of Texans ages 25-34 will have a certificate or degree.
☒ *Supports the economic future of the state*
-  **THE SECOND GOAL: COMPLETION**
At least 550,000 students in 2030 will complete a certificate, associate, bachelor's, or master's from an institution of higher education in Texas.
☒ *Requires large increases among targeted groups*
-  **THE THIRD GOAL: MARKETABLE SKILLS**
All graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills.
☒ *Emphasizes the value of higher education in the workforce*
-  **THE FOURTH GOAL: STUDENT DEBT**
Undergraduate student loan debt will not exceed 60 percent of first-year wages for graduates of Texas public institutions.
☒ *Helps students graduate with manageable debt*

Slide courtesy of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Research shows that higher education pays off. Lifetime earnings for those with a postsecondary credential, whether it is a certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree or beyond, increase significantly compared with those with only a high school diploma. Because of this, we must work to eliminate roadblocks to help smooth students' pathways to higher education. Doing this benefits individuals, the state, and the workforce.

Texas strives to be the best in all things. Creating an environment that enables Texans to enjoy a future with increased incomes, opportunities, and resources helps Texas remain the best place to live and work. Commissioner Paredes stated that the purpose of the 60x30TX plan is to take bold steps over the next 15 years to help Texas meet the needs of its workforce, communities, and individuals.



I joined Congressman Michael McCaul, Rep. Kevin Roberts, and Rep. Tan Parker at a press conference supporting HB 1290, which I proudly Joint-Authored to help small businesses by reducing unnecessary regulations. This bill will require state agencies to get rid of one regulation for every new one that they implement.



Sachse sent their first ever delegation to their state capitol this week! I was happy to meet with them and discuss upcoming legislation. I was joined by Mayor Pro Tem Charlie Ross, Councilman Jeff Bickerstaff, Councilman Cullen King, Sachse EDC CEO Leslyn Blake, Sachse Chamber President Molly Hall, and Mayor Mike Felix (not pictured).

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. Please continue to communicate your views on issues that are important to you.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing, please e-mail
Angie.Button@house.texas.gov